

Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance

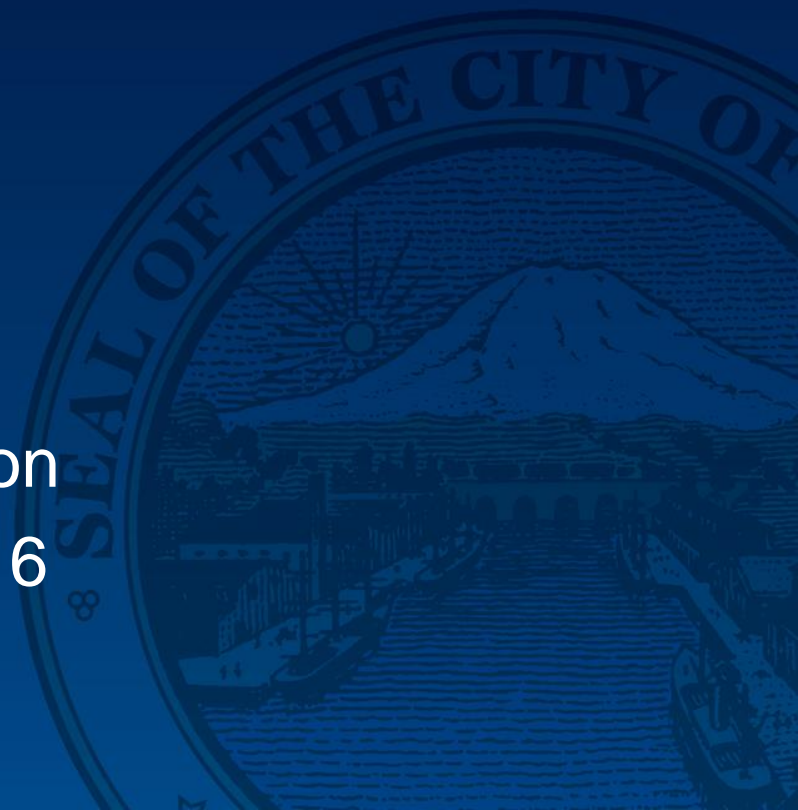
Environmental Services

Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability

Study Session

May 10, 2016

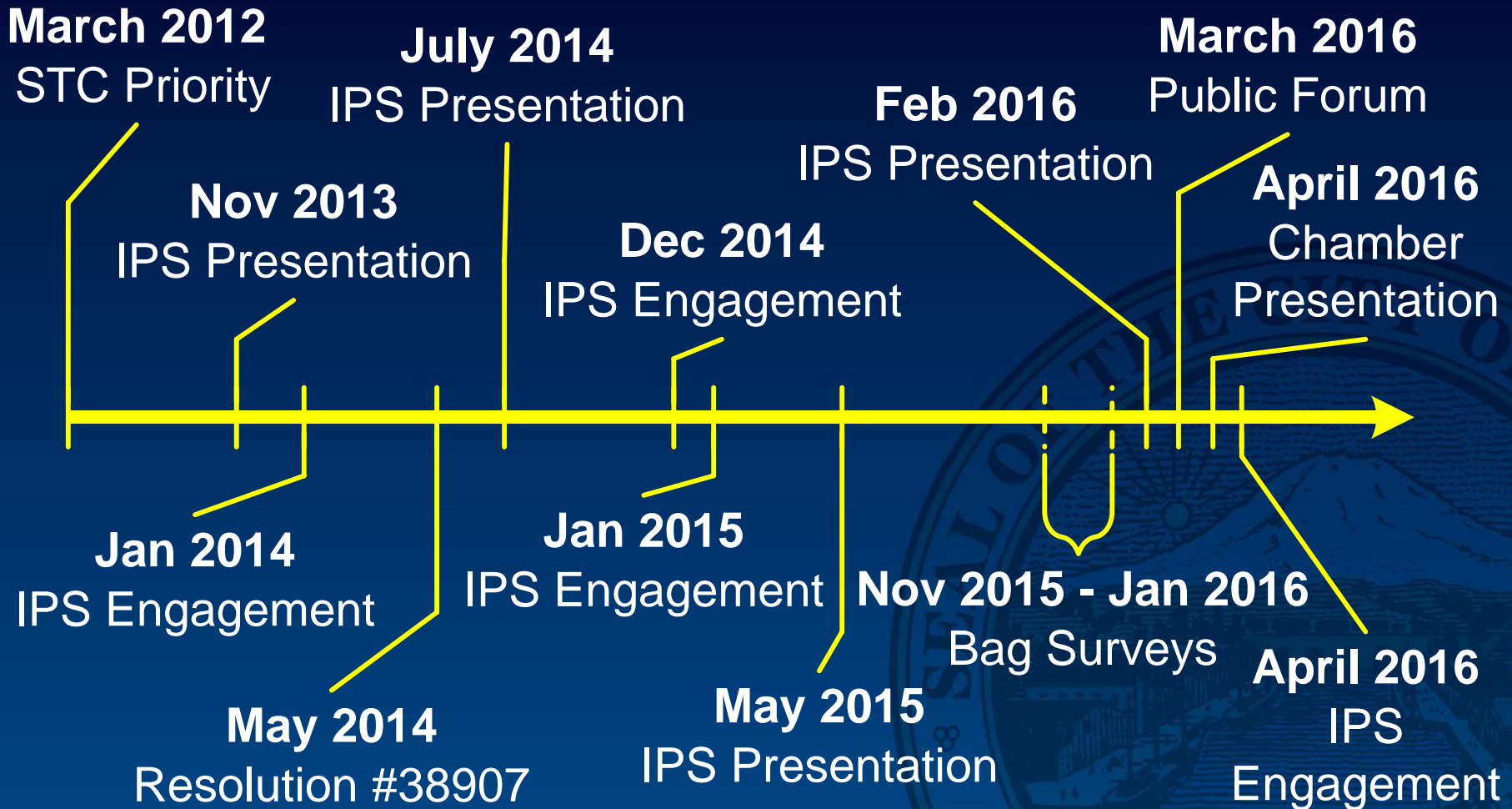
ITEM #2



Overview

- Tacoma uses ~70 – 100 million disposable plastic bags per year
- Disposable bag impacts
- Public input and community engagement
- Draft ordinance and implementation plans
 - Amended per IPS on April 27th
 - Modified implementation plan to include focused outreach to low income and communities of color
 - Added follow up study to assess impacts of BYOB ordinance on low income and communities of color

Timeline



Single-Use Plastic Carryout Bag Local Issues

- Impacts to solid waste system
 - 2015 Tacoma waste
 - 534 tons or 0.3% by weight
 - \$30,000/year disposal costs to ratepayers
 - Washington State Department of Ecology report estimates \$700-\$1000 a ton for recycling centers to remove plastic films from other recyclables
- Litter
- Wildlife

Single-Use Carryout Bag Issues

- Life Cycle Analysis: studies not definitive on best choice, but show clear trends
 - Reusable: woven plastic bags seem best
 - Plastic: worse for litter, better for resource and energy use
 - Paper: even recycled, is worse for resource use, energy use, and greenhouse gas emissions

Limiting Single-Use Carryout Bags

Strategy
Effectiveness

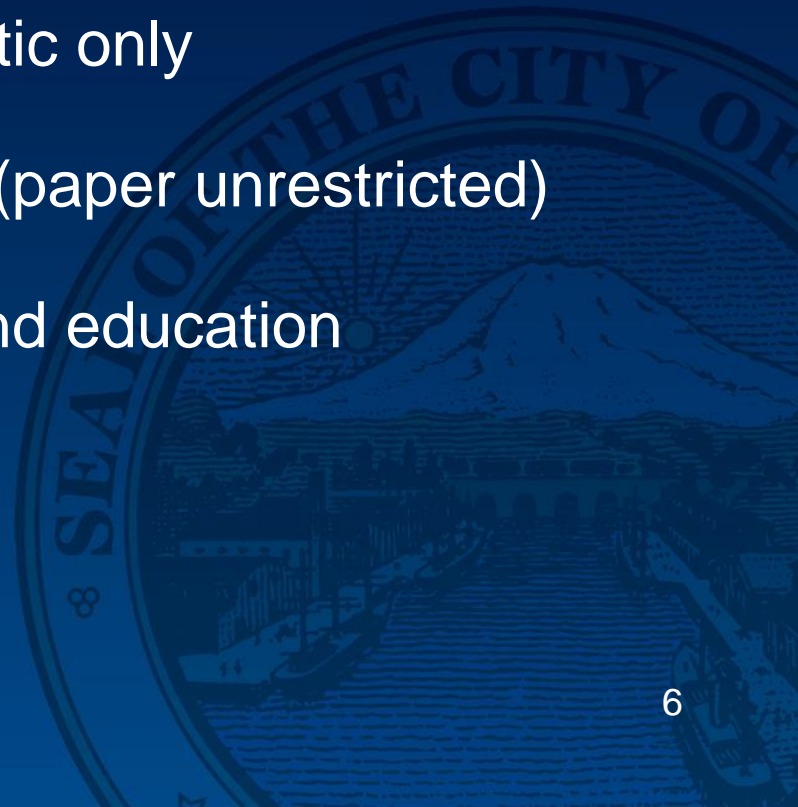


Fee on paper and plastic

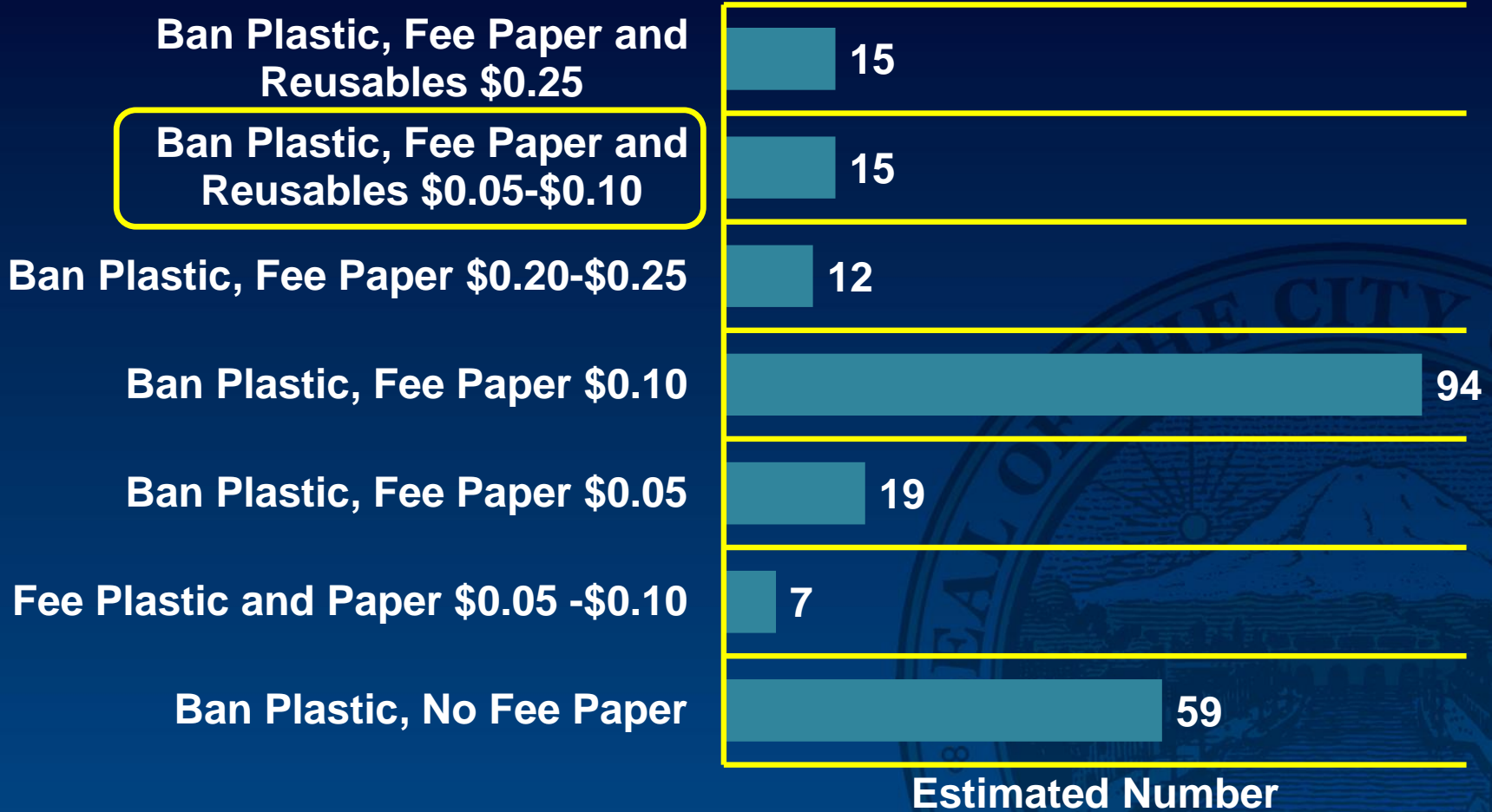
Fee on plastic only

Ban plastic (paper unrestricted)

Outreach and education



Variety of Bag Restrictions



Outreach to Date

- Webpage
- Press releases
- TV Tacoma
- Social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- Flyer to food banks
- Email Listservs
- Media: print, TV, radio
- Bag Forum (3/29)
- Chamber presentation (4/8)
- Washington jurisdictions' advice
- Neighborhood and Business District meetings

Online Feedback Surveys

- November 23, 2015 – January 15, 2016
- Public Survey
 - 2,188 responses; 1,008 comments
 - 55% want Council action
- Business Survey
 - 84 responses; 1,250 letters mailed to retailers
 - 71% did not want Council action

Input Summary

- March Forum written and oral comments:
 - 23 favor; 24 oppose; 1 neutral
- Other jurisdictions:
 - Generally positive feedback – residents and business
 - No increase in shoplifting with reusable bags
 - No health issues related to reusable bags
 - Consider closing loophole to prevent retailers converting to thicker bags
 - Fee may need to be increased to remain effective

Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance

- Intended to encourage people to bring their own carryout bags, NOT to pay pass-through charge
 - Results from other communities show it works
 - Direct and indirect social, economic and environmental costs
 - “Free” bags are not free
 - Businesses will directly recover bag costs

Bellingham Model

- This model is used in 12 of 14 laws in Washington
- Supported by Northwest Grocery Association (NWGA) whose membership includes Safeway, Albertsons, Costco Wholesale, QFC, Fred Meyer
- NWGA supports plastic bag bans with 3 criteria:
 - Applies to ALL retailers
 - Requires fee for paper bags, kept by retailer
 - Includes all bags, paper and plastic

Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance

- Retailers cannot provide single-use plastic carryout bags (film plastic <2.25 mils)
- Retailers may provide paper **and/or reusable carryout bags** for a \$0.05 (minimum) pass-through charge that they keep
 - WIC, TANF, SNAP, FAP don't pay pass-through charge
- 6 month phase-in period
 - Retailers given time to use stock of bags and adjust Point of Sale systems

Ordinance Definitions

- **“Carryout bag”**: any bag provided by retailer at the point of sale for use to transport purchases away from premises
 - Does not include: bags for bulk items, produce, damp items such as flowers, and prescription pharmacy, newspaper, laundry-dry cleaning, tires, and food take-out bags

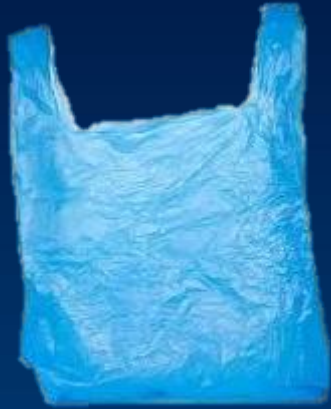
Ordinance Definitions

- **“Recycled paper carryout bag”**:
 - One-eighth barrel or larger must contain an average of 40% postconsumer recycled material
 - Eight-pound or smaller must contain a minimum of 20% postconsumer recycled material
- **“Reusable carryout bag”**: made for long term multiple reuse, with handles, can be cleaned or disinfected, and thicker than 2.25 mils if made of film plastic

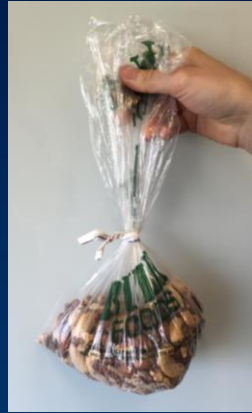
Ordinance Definitions

- **“Retail establishment”**: any corporation, partnership, business venture, sports or entertainment facility, government agency, vendor or other organization that provides goods
 - Includes: Department stores, grocery stores, convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants, farmers market, etc.
 - Does not include: Food banks and other food assistance programs

Bring Your Own Carryout Bag Ordinance



Not allowed



OK



\$0.05 min



**All other retail
provided
carryout bags
\$0.05 min**

Implementation

SHOPPER OUTREACH	Mo. 1	Mo. 2	Mo. 3	Mo. 4	Mo. 5	Mo. 6
Press Release	■					■
Dedicated Website	■					
Bill Insert for Single-Family Residents					■	
Mailing to Multi-Family Residents					■	
Neighborhood Councils and Community Groups				■		
TV Tacoma, News Articles	■					
Social Media	■					
Email Listservs	■					
Focused Outreach			■			
Community Events/Markets				■		
EnviroTalk Newsletter		■				
Point of Sale Cards & Posters			■			
Reusable Bag Giveaways			■			

Implementation

- Give away reusable carryout bags:
 - City to investigate sponsorship opportunities
 - Provide bags to:
 - Food Banks
 - WIC, TANF, SNAP, FAP
 - Community events
 - Tacoma FIRST 311
 - Share-a-Bag Exchange
 - Libraries
 - Community Centers

Focus on low income
and communities of color

Equity and Fairness

- “Free” bags are subsidized by all shoppers
 - Everyone pays for free carryout bags through higher prices on products, even if you BYOB
 - ~ \$37.50 per person per year
- BYOB Ordinance
 - People pay directly for bags; not via hidden costs
 - Should lower shopping bill overall, especially if BYOB
 - Lowest income shoppers do not pay fee
 - Implementation plan will focus on helping shoppers avoid paying pass-through charge

Implementation

BUSINESS OUTREACH	Mo. 1	Mo. 2	Mo. 3	Mo. 4	Mo. 5	Mo. 6
Press Release	■					■
Business District Engagements & Presentations	■					
Chamber of Commerce Engagements & Presentations	■					
Dedicated Website with Downloadable Resources	■					
Stakeholder Meeting with Handouts				■		
Mailing to all Businesses	■					■
Letter to Trade Groups			■			

Presentations to include ordinance language, allowable bags, training materials and outreach and education materials for employees and customers

Alternatives to disposable shopping bags

- Dog and cat waste

- Reuse produce or bread bags
- Specific dog waste bags
Example: $2000/\$39 = \$0.02/\text{each}$



- Garbage can liners

- No liner
- Liners
Example: $1000/\$29 = \$0.03/\text{each}$



Evaluation

- 12-18 months after effective date: evaluate impacts on shoppers, retailers, and the environment
- Emphasis on low income and communities of color shoppers



Washington DC Post Implementation Survey

- Survey Summary:
 - 53% residents support law, 30% have no feeling, 16% bothered
 - Businesses personally supportive of law by large margin
 - 69% business owners saw no negative impact on their business
 - Significant reduction in disposable bag use
 - Much less plastic bag litter
 - 50% business saving money, only 1 in 4 any negative impacts

Fiscal Impact

- Estimated at \$50,000
 - Solid Waste 4200 fund in 2017-18 biennium



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